

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2627

EXDIS

FROM HARROP

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, MILI, ET, SO, EG, US
SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN RESENTMENT OVER PUBLIC RATIONALE FOR
EGYPTIAN F-5 PURCHASE

1. DURING SPECIAL EMISSARY MEETINGS IN ADDIS FOREIGN MINISTER FELEKE AND FONOFF SECGEN MAJOR DAWAT COMPLAINED BITTERLY THAT SADAT JUSTIFIED HIS PROPOSED PURCHASE OF F-5 AIRCRAFT ON HIS NEED TO DEFEND EGYPT AGAINST POSSIBLE AGGRESSION FROM ETHIOPIA AND HIS CONCERN TO PROTECT THE HEADWATERS OF THE NILE. FELEKE AND DAWAT WERE OUTRAGED THAT US OFFICIAL SPOKESMEN HAD REPEATED THE SAME RIDICULOUS AND ABUSIVE ARGUMENT.

2. ETHIOPIANS SAID THEY CERTAINLY HAD NO DESIGNS UPON EGYPT, A COUNTRY MANY HUNDRED MILES AWAY, DISPUTE EGYPTIAN SUPPORT FOR THE INVASION OF ETHIOPIA. THEY SAID THAT ETHIOPIAN TECHNOLOGY WOULD NOT BE CAPABLE OF ARRESTING THE FLOW OF THE NILE OR EVEN MUCH INFLUENCING IT FOR AT LEAST 50 YEARS, IF THEN. THEY REGARD THESE ALLEGATIONS AS UNFRIENDLY AND GRATUITOUS.
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